

VZCZCXRO6041

PP RUEHBW RUEHIK RUEHPW RUEHYG

DE RUEHBUL #1114 1270730

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P 060730Z MAY 08

FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3802

INFO RUCNAFG/AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RHMFIU/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/OSD WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS KABUL 001114

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/FO, SCA/A, PRM

PASS TO USAID FOR AID/ANE, AID/DCHA/DG

NSC FOR JWOOD

OSD FOR SHIVERS

CG CJTF-101, POLAD, JICCEN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL PHUM PTER PK AF

SUBJECT: SPANTA'S APRIL 22-23 COUNTERPARTS TRIP TO ISLAMABAD

Ref: Kabul 1064

**¶11.** (SBU) Summary. The MFA's Pakistan desk said Foreign Minister Spanta made his April 22-23 trip to Islamabad to "open a new chapter in relations with the GoP." Spanta invited his Pakistani counterpart, Foreign Minister Qureshi, to Kabul. Spanta pressed Qureshi to name representatives to a Peace Jirga follow-up meeting and reminded him of a late-2007 bilateral agreement to enhance intelligence-sharing.

**¶12.** (SBU) According to the MFA, Spanta's visit was intended as a signal to Pakistan that Afghans had put their anger over past Inter-services Intelligence Directorate meddling behind them. Afghans are eager to open a new chapter in their relations with Pakistan. The MFA reported Spanta urged the Pakistanis to view the two countries "like twins." If one is harmed, Spanta said, the other would be harmed, too. Both countries confront a common enemy in terrorism, he argued; they must respond in a joint, coordinated manner. Spanta reminded the Pakistanis of their unrealized agreement of late last year to share intelligence with Kabul. Qureshi emphasized the use of economic and social means, in addition to military action, to defeat terrorism.

**¶13.** (SBU) Spanta pressed Qureshi into a promise that Pakistan will soon identify its 25 delegates to a Peace Jirga follow-up meeting. Qureshi endorsed the Canadian-led G-8 project to promote IRoA-GoP bureaucratic communications and cooperation.

**¶14.** (SBU) The MFA rather excitedly confirmed press reports that Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India had agreed in principle to build the TAPI pipeline, which is to convey Turkmen gas to the other three countries. The Pakistanis' registered with Spanta their concern that Turkmenistan's existing delivery commitments to Russia could so restrict the availability of gas that the pipeline would not be commercially justifiable. (Comment: We are unsure of the significance of "agreed in principle;" our working-level contacts are not aware of any new movement for the reason the Pakistanis cite and because of the security challenge of protecting a natural gas pipeline during an insurgency. A recent internal Afghan ministerial-level tour d'horizon of the country's energy situation extensively discussed Uzbekistan and Tajikistan's exports to Afghanistan, but ignored Turkmenistan as a possible provider of natural gas.)

**¶15.** (SBU) Qureshi pressed Spanta to accelerate refugee returns, according to the MFA. Spanta apologized for Afghanistan's insufficient refugee resettlement resources. Qureshi surprised Spanta by offering to join the Afghans in a Paris Conference request

for earmarked international funding to develop the latter's capacity to absorb refugees. Spanta agreed.

¶6. (SBU) In addition to Qureshi, Spanta met with Musharraf, lower house Speaker Fahmida Mirza, Pakistan Peoples Party regent Ali Zardari and Awami National Party chief Asfandyar Wali Khan.

WOOD